

AUDUBON'S APPRENTICESHIP DAYS IN COUERON



Discovering what would be his life's work
in a book of illustrations Papa gave him,
Jay Jay woke one morning with an urge
to copy nature, to replicate what country
rambles couldn't keep—a nest, a speckled
egg, the luster on a lapwing. He learned
that pigment dabbed with water endowed
the curlew's eye with life and held it fresh,
untainted. His early tries he likened to
“a family of cripples,” a rollcall of the maimed
that he burned each birthday, keeping only
a lust, a joy, to possess what wouldn't keep,
a deep-felt animus, like Christ's, to resurrect
the dead—each species, every sketch, a Lazarus.

Richard Taylor

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A great nation
deserves great art.